

ORGANISE!

for class struggle anarchism

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Issue 33

Criminal Justice Bill — The State prepares to charge



INSIDE: The Battle of Wanstead, Bad Attitude — Interview, Outbreak of Peace? South Africa-Palestine-Ireland, Internationalism, Abortion, And Much More!

Magazine of the Anarchist Communist Federation

ORGANISE!

ORGANISE! IS THE national magazine of the Anarchist Communist Federation (ACF). *Organise!* is a quarterly theoretical journal published in order to develop anarchist communist ideas. It aims to give a clear anarchist viewpoint on contemporary issues, and initiate debates on areas not normally covered by agitational journals.

All articles in the magazine are by ACF members unless signed. Some reflect ACF policy and others open up debate in undiscussed areas, helping us to develop our ideas further.

Please feel welcome to contribute articles to *Organise!* — as long as they don't conflict with our Aims and Principles we will publish them. (Letters, of course, need not agree with our A&Ps at all.)

Deadlines for next issue are 4th December for features and reviews, and 11 December for letters and news.

All contributions for the next issue should be sent to:

ACF, c/o 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX

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NOW IS A difficult time to be asking for money, with many out of work or wondering if they're going to get the chop. Cash is in short supply. But *Organise!* desperately needs money to continue to appear and to improve. We need money for our projected pamphlets, for the stickers and posters and leaflets we intend to produce. So we are asking you, dear reader, to think about sending something in, no matter how small, to help us continue the fight for anarchist communism. We know that many of you value the ideas presented in *Organise!* So please help us by sending in POs, IMOs, or cash. You can even send us a standing order to our account to regularly support **ORGANISE!** Write to the London address for account details. Dig into your pockets now!

Thanks to all those who contributed to the Press Fund this issue: £80 pounds, Sheffield; £100, London E3; £96, London ACF boot sale.

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THE ANARCHIST Communist Federation is an organisation of class struggle anarchists. We have members and groups in the following areas:

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Midlands: Aylesbury, Birmingham, Chesterfield, Coventry, Nottingham, Saffron Walden, Worcester.

North East: Blyth, Chester-le-Street, Gateshead, Newcastle, Ulveston.

North West: Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield.

South East: Brighton, Canterbury, London (East, North, West), Portsmouth, Twickenham, Woking.

South West: Buckfastleigh, Exeter.

NORTHERN IRELAND
Portrush, Warrenpoint.

SCOTLAND
Glasgow.

WALES
Lampeter, Pontypool.

Contact ACF (No other mention)
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Organise! Back Issues

BACK ISSUES OF *Organise!* (from issue 14 to issue 28 inclusive) are still available, from the London group address, as are a few copies of its forerunner *Virus*. They cost 20p & sae each and include:

- *Organise!* 25: SOLD OUT
- *Organise!* 26: Women & Revolution; Direct action; US Greens.
- *Organise!* 27: LA Riots; Yugoslavia; Malcolm X.
- *Organise!* 28: ERM; Recession; Detective Fiction
- *Organise!* 29: Debate on the Unions; Italian Workers Fight Back

- *Organise!* 30: SOLD OUT
- *Organise!* 31 Somalia: Travellers; Natural Laws
- *Organise!* 32 SOLD OUT

Photo credit

THE PHOTOS for 'M11—The Battle of Wanstead Continues' and 'Monkey Wrenchers: the Politics and History of Earth First!' are thanks to Black and White and Green, Eye Level, 10 Waterloo Place, Brighton, East Sussex.

IMPORTANT! Correspondence for ACF nationally should be sent to Devon address (see 'Want to Join?' box). Correspondence for *Organise!* and for ACF (London) should continue to go to Whitechapel High Street.

M11 — The Battle of Wanstead continues

ORGANISE! URGES ALL like-minded working class people to join the fight against the planned link road between the Hackney Marshes and Redbridge, North-East London.

If the construction of the link motorway between the A12 and the M11 goes ahead, it

campaign and even a lollipop lady who was sacked by the police because of it.

ferred bruises and strains. Many people were dragged away by their hair, one woman had her arm broken and a 17-year-old protester suffered a spine injury. An 11-year-old boy also suffered in-

talked about how proud he was of "the sensitive approach of the police".

Symbol of resistance

This mindless act of violence, carried out even against children and elderly residents present, certainly didn't deserve the peaceful nature of the opposition it encountered. The loss of the Wanstead tree, which for the last six weeks had been the symbol of local working class resistance to the 'bulldozer' state can only highlight the fact that the struggle continues. "They took the tree, but they can't take the common!" The tree was brought down after a brave fight, but as the campaigners say, the tide is turning and we can win now that action is broadening. In Hackney a new alliance against the M11 has been set up recently. This is an area which will be badly affected by this first of many plans to develop the area around Stratford for the Channel Tunnel and East Thames Corridor development.

Anyone who would like to get involved or would like to make donations of any kind should contact the **No M11 Link Campaign** on 081-520 5709 (Info+Direct action) or 081 530 6369 (General info) or by writing to them at **PO Box 956, Leytonstone Delivery Office, 6 Joseph Ray Road, London E11 1AA.**



would mean the destruction of 400 homes and 300 trees as well as the division of whole communities in Leyton, Leytonstone and Wanstead by the pollution and noise of a four-lane motorway.

Occupations

Almost four months into their contract Norwest Holst Construction have hardly started building the road.

On November 6th several hundred demonstrators tore down fencing around George Green, Wanstead and a 400-year-old chestnut tree there. The site was also occupied and continuous actions take place every week. Houses due to be demolished have been squatted and repaired.

The support locally has been very good, with various groups including pensioners and schools supporting the

The attempt to protect the tree was crushed by brutal police violence. On Tuesday, the 7th December 1993 at 4am, 200 members of the Metropolitan police force, supported by security guards, started to remove 150 peaceful protesters who insisted they would not retaliate, from the area around the tree.

The 'Battle of Wanstead' lasted until the early afternoon, when the tree was finally bulldozed. Some 18 people (one of whom was an ACF member) were arrested, two were charged with 'Breach of the Peace' and 'Assault'. Ironically 'Breach of the Peace' and 'Assault', however, were once again proven to be rather a speciality of the servants of the public.

Several demonstrators ended up with broken fingers or ribs, had their teeth knocked out or, at best, suf-

juries. At least four people got run over by the 'cherry picker' lorry, a device the police used for removing protesters from the top of the tree.

Later, in an interview for the Six o'clock news, the responsible chief constable



AN OUTBREAK OF 'PEACE'

South Africa

ALL OVER THE world peace seems to be breaking out. The talks between the British Government and Sinn Fein-IRA, the Israel-PLO accords, the end of the Ethiopian-Tigrean-Eritrean war, and the talks between the **African National Congress** and the South African government all appear to point to peace on earth. *Nothing could be further from the truth.* With the collapse of the Soviet bloc, the United States is keen to sew things up where before there were possibilities for its leading opponent to exploit the situation to its advantage. As part of the New World Order, the United States is putting pressure on its allies to sort out some sort of democratic fix, where agreement can be reached with the emerging new ruling class in the opposition movements, as in Palestine and South Africa.

In South Africa the **African National Congress** and its ally, the **South African Communist Party**, has been at the forefront of this democratic fix. Nelson Mandela spoke at the United Nations General Assembly about the need to lift sanctions and normalise the situation in South

Normalisation

As part of the normalisation process, sanctions are being lifted by the US and the Commonwealth. New York's mayor announced that \$40 billion would be released from pension funds, hitherto blocked under municipal anti-

non-racialism to flourish in South Africa. New trade and investment relations need to be encouraged and promoted to stimulate economic growth."

The transition to power-sharing between the **ANC** and the Afrikaaner ruling clique will not be smooth. Elements opposed to these moves amongst the die-hard Boer right wing, including armed fascist elements organised around the **AWB**, and Zulu tribalists in **Inkatha**, who have been used up to now as an auxiliary of the Afrikaaner state, will oppose the new order and may attempt to mount armed insurrections.

There will also be attempts at destabilisation from amongst elements in the military, police and secret services, in alliance with the alliance of **Inkatha** and the Boer right. The new regime that is being created will also face trouble from amongst the black industrial working class and from the urban and rural poor, particularly in the townships, shanty-towns and squatter camps. Part of the



move to a new order will be the creation of a new black capitalist class and upper middle class, recruited in the main from the ranks of the **ANC**. The economic and political situation for the mass of the black population will not have changed in the slightest — in fact the chances are that conditions will deteriorate with attacks on living standards, rent rises, and speed-ups at work.

Expectations are still high that real change can come about, and when the **ANC** fails to meet them, a new wave of radicalisation may develop. When and if that happens, the **ANC** will do its utmost to crush any dissent.



Africa. Sanctioning this, President Clinton said that the US would take steps to permit lending from the **International Monetary Fund**, and that "We must now respect the judgement of the leaders of South Africa and move to lift our remaining sanctions". Mandela went on to hold talks with **IMF** and **World Bank** officials. This can only mean that the **IMF** and **World Bank** have told him what they have told other national leaders in the past — discipline your working class, make them work harder for less, or we will not bail you out.

apartheid laws, to be invested in South Africa. As part of his efforts to shore up South African capitalism, Mandela is appealing for foreign investment. This is part of the deal he and the Afrikaaner state apparatus have struck — a transition to power-sharing, in return for the end of sanctions and embargoes, and the encouragement of foreign investment, in order to save South African capitalism, which is in deep crisis.

For its part, the Stalinist controlled **Anti Apartheid Movement** in Britain called for a "new economic environment . . . for democracy and

Ireland

THE PEACE TALKS between John Major and Albert Reynolds, Prime minister of the Irish Republic, on one hand, and talks between the British State and Sinn Fein/IRA on the other, are yet another facet of the New World Order.

Major hopes to emulate Clinton's role in talks over South Africa and Palestine, and shine up his own tarnished image. At the same time, with the end of the Soviet bloc, Northern Ireland has lost much of its strategic importance to the British State, which always thought it could be used as a destabilising factor by the Soviets. About 20,000 troops are tied down in Northern Ireland, the province is costing vast amounts in reparations and social security payments, not to mention the damage and

disruption caused on the mainland by the IRA bombing campaign.

The British State would be willing to jettison the costly province, as has been implied in the peace talks, but is tied down by its close links with loyalism. When Ireland was partitioned in 1921, the British State held on to Northern Ireland thanks to a mobilisation of the Protestant ruling class in the province led by Lord Carson. The links between the Unionists and the Conservative Party have been long-established, and most recently, the Conservatives were bailed out by the Unionists when they risked losing a vote in Parliament. The British State is still worried about a mobilisation by the loyalists, who were able to pull out 100,000 in the streets of Belfast against the Anglo-Irish

agreement in the '80s. The British State also has close links with the loyalist paramilitary outfits, used by British intelligence to murder Republican militants.

Split

It is quite likely that if the Unionists are able to pull large numbers of people out on the streets again, unfortunately including large numbers of Protestant workers, then the British government will back down over its plans for the province. What it hopes for is a split in the Unionist camp between those who will jockey for bargaining positions within a new power-sharing set-up, and those who will be totally opposed to such an arrangement, that is those within the paramilitary groups, and sections of Paisley's Democratic Unionists. In many ways this reflects the political situation in South Africa. The white bloc has been fragmented, with some supporting a deal with the ANC, and others bitterly opposed. If we continue with this comparison, then we see that Sinn Fein itself is filling the role of the ANC in the North. They are prepared to stop the armed actions of the IRA, if they can screw a number of concessions out of the British government. In doing so, they may meet with dissent within their own ranks, both within Sinn Fein and within the IRA, some of whom will be in favour of continuing armed struggle.

In all of this, both the loyalist and Republican organisations are continuing to sabotage unity between Catholic and Protestant workers. Sinn Fein/IRA still has the alle-

giance of many Catholic workers (in the past 20 years 10,000 Republicans have been charged with paramilitary offences). The loyalists can still pull many Protestant workers

out on the streets. To develop an independent working class politics, based on unity and anarchist communism, will be a hard task but one that must not be shirked. The few anar-

chist communists in Ireland must work towards the creation of a movement based on these politics and that rejects the politics of Republicanism and of Loyalism.

Peace in the Middle East?

ONE OF THE great set-pieces to usher in the New World Order, the Pax Americana, is the Israel-PLO accord.

With one sweep of a pen peace was declared in the Middle East. In front of the world's television cameras, Rabin and Arafat sealed the accord with a handshake at a razzmatazz ceremony in Washington presided over by President Clinton. Clinton promised US investment in the Middle East, in the same way as he had promised it in South Africa.

Dissent

But behind the showmanship lies the grim truth. The Gaza-Jericho accord has not ended the fighting in Palestine. The murder of Palestinians by the Israeli security forces has continued, with renegade PLO and Hamas (Moslem fundamentalists) commandos retaliating with the slaughter of Israeli settlers.

Within the PLO, dissent flared up with attacks on the supporters of the Arafat line, including the killing of Mouin Shabataya, a leading military



leader and Arafat henchman in the Lebanon.

The accord was overwhelmingly to the benefit of Israel. It will allow the PLO to take over the running of Jer-

icho and Gaza. What this means is that the PLO will police these regions and control dissident and Hamas/Hizbollah factions there, with the right being reserved for Israel to send in its troops if things get out of control. This will stifle protest at home in Israel, as well as taking pressure off the pressurised Israeli armed forces. Even this limited concession to the PLO does not involve the greater part of the occupied territories. The dissident PLO factions and Hamas and Hizbollah realise this and will continue to resist the accord. In doing so, they will recruit to a greater extent among the mass of the Palestinian population, who will continue to live in squalid conditions in the refugee camps.

Israel will still insist on its right to make counter-attacks against the Hizbollah forces based in southern Lebanon.



Remember the seven days of bombing in July 1993 which left 120 dead and 400 wounded? Here too in the Lebanon, the mass of the population is facing economic difficulties. The middle class has all but disappeared, and the Hariri government cannot keep its economic promises.

In fact, as we have pointed out in past issues of *Organise!* the whole region of the Middle East is a powder keg.

The situation of the Kurds in Turkey, Iran and Iraq, of the Armenians in Turkey, the vast numbers of impoverished people in all of the Middle Eastern states. The butchery of the Marsh Arabs by the Saddam regime, the war raging in Afghanistan between different Moslem factions, and the interests of Syria, Iraq, Iran and Turkey in expanding their influences in the region.

Iran will back its fundamentalist protégés in Lebanon and Palestine in fierce opposition to the accord. Syria

will try to get concessions out of Israel, in other words the handing back of the Golan Heights. It will use its influence over Hizbollah and the PLO dissidents as a bargaining counter.

Arafat hopes to use the territories given over to the PLO as a power base, as an embryonic Palestinian state. He counts on the political and economic backing of the USA, Britain, and France/Germany. In return he will attempt to control the Intifada and the Palestinian masses. For its part, the USA wishes to keep its old ally Israel sweet, whilst bringing sections of the PLO more under its control, continuing to assert its predominant influence in the region, and keeping its rivals of France/Germany at bay.

However, the accord is a house of cards, and may well be sabotaged, not least by the actions of the mass of the dispossessed in Palestine and Lebanon.



ACE

Anarchist Communist Editions

ACE pamphlets are available c/o 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX.

Making Progress. Describes how and why the ACF was formed, and the continuing evolution of our ideas and practice. A 'beginners' guide' to ACF! 30p & SAE.

Manifesto of Libertarian Communism by Georges Fontenis. A key text of anarchist communism. Though flawed, the best features need to be incorporated into modern revolutionary libertarian theory and practice. 60p & SAE.

Role of the Revolutionary Organisation. Anarchist communists reject the Leninist model of a 'vanguard' party as counter-revolutionary. What then is the role of a revolutionary organisation? This pamphlet sets out to explain. All libertarian revolutionaries should read this fundamental text. 60p & SAE from ACF c/o 84b Whitechapel High St, London E1 7QX.

The Myth of Labour's Socialism is now out of print.

NEW

A new revised edition of our very popular pamphlet *Anarchism — As We See It*. Describes the basic ideas of anarchist communism in easy to read form. 60p & SAE.

Lebanon: political situation

WE PRINT BELOW the comments of the comrades of Al Badil Al Taharrouri (Libertarian Alternative) a Lebanese libertarian communist organisation.

All the Arab Communist Parties are presently suffering the disastrous consequences of the rapid collapse of Stalinism which has been the sole reference point for a long time. This evolution of things could have pushed them to a radical revision of their positions... but we must say that unfortunately it is more of an evolution to the right. The Lebanese Communist Party is one of these. At

its last congress, it managed to keep its name, but evolved into a party of social-democratic orientation, calling for a politics of 'class conciliation'. We will content ourselves with saying that this party thinks that the state of peace in Lebanon with the accord of Taef is due to "struggles and sacrifices of Lebanese patriots and democrats and their ambitions for liberation, national unity, democracy and pro-

gress". This accord, signed in one of the most reactionary states in the world (Saudi Arabia) is an essentially confessional accord, dividing the Lebanese cake between the different confessional bourgeoisies.

Extreme left

Al Badil Al Taharrouri goes on to speak about the small organisations of the extreme left, the Organisation of Lebanese Communist Action, the Lebanese Communist Union, and above all the Revolutionary Communist Grouping (Lebanese section of the 4th International) of Trotskyist persuasion. These have avoided the immediate repercussions of the collapse of Stalinism, but have no self-criticisms of Leninism.

They go on to speak about a number of libertarians who are attempting to progress because the road is now open. The actual evolution of things proves how correct were the positions of libertarians in the past, the struggle against bureaucracy starting in 1917,

against centralism, bureaucratic state capitalism, for self-organisation, workers' autonomy, revolutionary federalism and genuine individual liberty. They feel that the Lebanon, a land of a multitude of communities and of a barbarous capitalism, is very much a land open to these ideas. They feel there are honest working class people in all the above-mentioned organisations, with whom dialogue must be opened, whilst pointing out that the left has played the confessional game itself, long before *perestroika*.

They finish by talking about the collapse of the left, the resurgence of market capitalism, the reinforcement of dictatorial regimes in the Arab world and throughout the South, and the widening gap between the poor and the rich.

Only the conscious gathering together of people of the dominated classes, of all sorts of oppressed, around innovative revolutionary ideas based on the libertarian communist tradition, offers a way forward.

Friends and Neighbours

If you like what you read in *Organise!* you might be interested in these publications:

Counter Information. Quarterly newsheet produced by independent collective. Information on struggle worldwide. Free copy with SAE from: Pigeonhole CI, c/o 11 Forth St, Edinburgh EH1, Scotland.

Subversion. Quarterly magazine of group of same name, with politics close to ours. Free copy from Dept 10, 1 Newton St, Manchester M1 1HW.

MONKEY WRENCHERS

The politics and history of Earth First!

EARTH FIRST! HAS become famous in the last few years as a radical environmental activist group that espouses sabotage and direct action to protect the 'wilderness'. In reality **Earth First!** is a cover name taken by a variety of radical North American environmentalists (some individuals and some groups) who share the desire to defend 'nature'. **Earth First!** is thus not a singular group with a shared political outlook and a common structure, rather it is a movement, containing a spectrum of opinions, and completely autonomous activity.

But there are common threads to the political make-up of the people within **EF!** and this movement does have a definable political history. There is also a newspaper published eight times a year, called, not unsurprisingly, **Earth First!** The paper qualifies itself as "... a forum for the no-compromise environmental movement". It is a 40-page tabloid consisting of an eclectic mix of news, campaigns, action reports, letters, upcoming events, politics, poetry and humour. The overwhelming emphasis is on action, and there is little in-depth theory. Over 5000 copies are distributed each issue.

There is also an annual get-together of **EF!** activists from across North America known as the Round River Rendezvous. The last of these was held in June '92 in the San Juan Mountains of Southern Colorado.

Two interesting books that discuss the formation, underlying political outlook and growth of the **Earth First!** movement; from an insider's perspective, are *Green Rage* by Christopher Manes and the sections by Dave Foreman in the book *Defending the Earth* in which he argues with social ecologist Murray Bookchin. It

is from these books that I trace the early history of **EF!**

Radical action!

Earth First! was formed in the Spring of 1980 by five disgruntled mainstream environmentalists. They left behind paid positions in such groups as the Wilderness Society, the Sierra Club and Friends of the Earth, in order to found a more radical, activist based group. They saw a two-fold purpose, firstly they saw the necessity for more radical action and secondly they thought the mainstream environmental organisations would benefit and appear moderate by having a more radical wing.

These five were all white, male, 25-35 years old and shared an admiration for characters in Ed Abbey's novel *The Monkey Wrench Gang*. Politically these characters can be described as "Rednecks for the Wilderness". In class terms it was much more working class than most of the rest of the environmental movement, especially its upper echelons. The politi-

Below: EF!-style direct action.

cal background of the five included both libertarian right (Dave Foreman) and libertarian left (Mike Roselle), but shared a 'rugged individualism'.

All rejected the bureaucratic hierarchical structure of the reformist mainstream and sought to build a movement of grass-roots activists. Emphasis was put on action for the environment; any political, social or economic questions were seen as side-issues that would water down the ecological agenda. This political confusion was to lead **Earth First!** into the swamp of 'Deep Ecology' from which it has yet to fully pull itself out.

Deep Ecology!

The basis of Deep Ecology is the total and unconditional right of 'nature' to exist without human interference. Essentially a radical liberal approach. But it does have a sinister twist. Humans are seen as somehow separate from 'nature', and it is humans that are destroying 'nature'. Deep Ecology has no social analysis whatsoever. Hence it is not human society or capitalism that is to blame just humans. This led to some **EF!**ers making absurd comments like "AIDS is good because it kills humans".

The focus of Deep Ecology has been on the preservation and extension of 'wilderness'. This is the natural environment in its pure complete state. No time is given to any other aspect of the global environment. The places where we live are clearly not 'natural' and hence not a concern. The stupidity of all this really is amazing.

To all their critics Deep Ecologists have a standard answer. Anyone who suggests the necessity of a *social critique* to understand human society and its relationship to the environment is seen as anthropocentric. That is putting humans above and in control of 'nature'.

The above description of Deep Ecology is oversimplified. Like much of 'Ghetto Anarchism' every person you meet has a different perception of what it means. Any analysis of the social characteristics of many of these people would probably show the same moralism, liberalism, rebelliousness and individualism that plagues the anarchist scene everywhere. Some **Earth Firsters!** have now moved far towards a more social critique and yet still call themselves Deep Ecologists.

Growth!

From its small beginnings **EF!** grew fast. The **Earth First!** newsletter reached 1500 subscribers within its first year.



The media happily covered the first of **EF!**'s many media stunts; the 'cracking' of Glen Canyon Dam. **EF!** had popular appeal. Its dynamic, humorous, action-orientated and rebellious image appealed particularly to young people. 'Deep Ecology' also found fertile soil within white North American youth. Any remnants of class or political consciousness have long ago been bulldozed out of the American Psyche.

Geographically **EF!** spread from its SouthWest birthplace, in the deserts of Arizona and New Mexico, to the rest of the Western United States and Canada. In particular to the Rocky Mountain states of Montana, Wyoming and Colorado; and the Western seaboard states of California, Oregon, Washington and British Columbia. The Western states are the most recently colonised of the North American Continent, hence the only states to have significant wilderness areas left. Even so, **EF!** has now spread eastward as well.

By the mid-80s various factions within **EF!** were becoming discernible. The 'old guard' centred around Dave Foreman still controlled the **EF!** paper. The 'ecotopians' in NW California who saw an environmental utopia (on the Western seaboard) coming about through a radical green state. And more interestingly the anarcho-environmentalists such as the Washington-state-based 'Alien Nation'. This group advocated opposition to capitalism and its consumer culture. With a clearer revolutionary stance on opposition to the mainstream reformist environmentalists. They have gone on to produce the anarcho-**EF!** paper *Live wild or die*.

Rows!

By 1987 these factions within **EF!** were beginning to argue. Initially over the rigid control the 'Foremanistas' held over the journal. This faction was refusing to print critical letters/articles from other groups. The dispute soon escalated into a political battle between the more redneck 'old guard' and the younger 'anarchists'. The 'old guard' defended the racist, nationalist, misanthropic bigotry of many of the leading figures, eg Ed Abbey, Dave Foreman and Chris Manes. The anarchists found it unacceptable. For a good account of this see *Alien-Nation's* article 'A glimpse of the July 4th **EF!** Gathering', printed in the Fall 1987 *Fifth Estate*.

But the internal disputes were neither coherent nor very developed ideologically. All sides still stuck to Deep Ecology. The disputes would coalesce around more 'practical' issues. For example at the 1988 Gathering one faction rallied around the US Flag, the other burnt it. This caused much controversy around the issues of symbolism and rebelliousness but didn't lead into a debate about nationalism or capitalism. (Even today many **EF!**ers still see themselves as patriots).

At the same time as the internal dis-

putes, **EF!** came under attack from the outside. Firstly direct physical attack from the state. But also a barrage of academic ideological criticism from the left. Of note in particular is the attack of **EF!** by Murray Bookchin, one of the leading US radical ecologists. In a similar vein was George Bradford's attack in *Fifth Estate*. Both of these put the boot into Deep Ecology and the bigoted politics of the then **EF!** leadership. Unfortunately both critiques came from outside **EF!** and by failing to recognise **EF!**'s diversity came across as attacking **EF!** as a whole, adding further to **EF!**'s paranoid 'bunker mentality'.

Repression!

As the level of state repression against **EF!** intensified this paranoia grew. In May '89 an FBI entrapment operation put four leading Arizona activists in jail. An FBI agent had infiltrated Arizona **EF!** and talked people into bombing power lines. Of course it was a set-up. A year later the car in which two leading Californian **EF!**ers were driving was blown up. These are just the two most serious acts of harassment and repression by the FBI, there have been many others in what seems an FBI 'Cointelpro'. (This term was used in the seventies to describe the FBI Counter INTELigence Program which was used to destroy and discredit the Black Panthers and the American Indian Movement).

Splits!

The internal political dispute within **EF!** came to a head at the Summer '90 Gathering. The 'Old Guard' lost its control of the **EF!** journal and many of these people then left **EF!** (One person I spoke to gave me the impression that many of the more working-class 'redneck' types also left at this point as the more articulate ex-student drop-outs took over. I don't know how true this is.) The control

The Friends of Durruti

New pamphlet!

LONDON ACF have produced a pamphlet on the Friends of Durruti, a much misunderstood group that attempted to defend and extend the Spanish Revolution of 1936. In criticisms of the leadership of the anarcho-syndicalist unions they represented an important moment in anarchist history. Included: an historical introduction by an ACF member, and two political statements from the Friends. This will be the first in the Stormy Petrel series. Coming up will be a pamphlet on the Italian Factory Councils of 1920-21.

Copies of the Friends of Durruti pamphlet available from ACF (London) c/o 84b Whitechapel High St, London E1 at 75p inc. postage.

of the paper was now given to an open, rotating collective to be based in Montana. It was now much more open to printing all sides of an argument.

And certainly arguments did continue because **EF!** was still a very diverse organisation. Some of these include for and against hunting, animal rights and violence. But the most interesting came from the Californian 'Ecotopians', who were arguing for more of a 'party line' approach within the journal. Probably correct in some ways eg, keeping out letters containing vicious personal attacks. But the majority wanted and retained the open 'movement' style paper. Despite these internal divisions the journal seems to have improved in quality and circulation in the last year or so.

Redwood Summer!

Summer 1990 saw another turnabout in the activities of **EF!** The Northern Californian **EF!**ers (the Ecotopians) organised a series of mass actions and publicity stunts to protect some of the last of the Redwood forest from being chopped down. For the first time **EF!** made links with the workers in the logging industry and tried to develop a joint approach against the timber multinationals. Some **EF!**ers began to make links with the syndicalist IWW union. This project was only partly successful but it did show a healthier awareness of social reality than most previous **EF!** campaigns.

The underlying individualism and moralism of much of **EF!** has led them away from social activism. Redwood Summer was a unique turnaround; particularly valuable at a time of deep economic crisis. Many tens of thousands of resource industry jobs (forestry, mining, fishing etc.) are being lost at this time, primarily due to automation and the bad economic climate. But industry bosses are quick to blame the environmentalists for all the problems and job losses. A semi-fascist movement, the 'wise-use' movement has been set up by the bosses to channel workers' anger and frustration. This has led to a number of violent attacks against environmentalists. Clearly many more campaigns such as Redwood Summer are needed.

Conclusion!

An issue of *Wildcat* included a scathing attack on the British **Earth First!** movement. Their conclusion is to stay away from **EF!** entirely. My impression of the North American **EF!** is that it is much more diverse and developed, but is clearly not a revolutionary grouping. The biggest problems with much of **EF!** here are the paranoia, individualism and attachment to Deep Ecology. My conclusion would be to maintain a positive scepticism, to support and defend their actions while criticising the politics.

To get in touch with **Earth First!**, for the journal or the book *Ecodefense: EF!* POB 5176, Missoula, MT 59806, USA.

A Criminal Injustice

THE GOVERNMENT'S FLAGSHIP legislation for the new Year is the Criminal Justice and Public Order Bill. It is one of the most vindictive and unpleasant pieces of legislation introduced by even this government and it is their hope that its sheer nastiness will serve to unite right wing rebels behind Major and perhaps to attract back some of the voters who have defected to the British National Party.

The main features of the Bill include:

- The increased use of detention against young 'offenders'.
- The re-introduction of electronic tags to enforce curfew orders.
- The weakening of the right to silence.
- The denial of bail for people re-arrested when already on bail.
- Extended privatisation of the prison system.
- The removal of the right of prison officers to take industrial action.
- Measures against travellers and squatters and raves.
- The introduction of new stop and search powers and other anti-'terrorist' offences.
- The introduction of an offence of disrupting a lawful activity.

The most striking feature of this legislation is its apparent lack of cohesion. The Labour and Liberal Parties will use this as evidence of the government lacking a sense of vision and overall purpose. However, there is a very clear purpose in the above. It combines the pursuit of long-established Tory class interest with an emphasis on punitive measures rather than the causes of crime or the embarrassing number of high-profile 'miscarriages of justice' which had led to the Runciman Commission and the plans for a new bill in the first place.

Class

The class interests can be seen in the privatisation plans for the new borstals and prison ships and the plans in the accompanying Police Bill to shift power away from local authorities towards the centre. These changes are business as usual for this government, similar steps having been taken in health, social services, education, and any number of privatised industries. Of more concern is banning of industrial action by prison officers. Now we do not argue that screws are 'workers in uniform' as the half-baked Trotskyist argument goes, and we have no sympathy for a component of the State. A precedent is set, though, for the banning of industrial action by public sector workers like firefighters and health workers.

The class interests are also in evidence in the other legislation. The lawful ac-

tions whose disruption particularly concerned Michael Howard are hunting and shooting. These are to be protected while raves and festivals are to be attacked. This legislation can also be used against other political actions such as Twyford Down and Greenham and potentially against industrial action. The government is showing it will not tolerate dissent except in its most passive forms.

The stop and search powers legitimise the police cordon around the City of London. This could shift any future bombing campaigns to less high-profile financial targets and so makes it more likely for attacks on shopping centres such as that at Warrington to be repeated. Clearly the government is more concerned for its pals in the City than for 12-year-old kids.

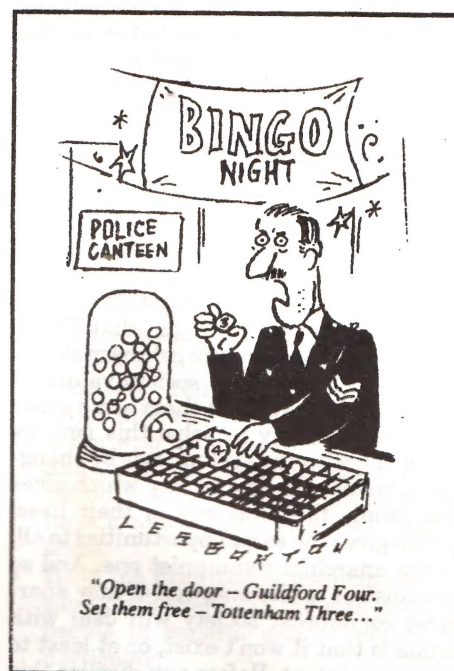
But, of course, 12-year-old kids are the target for other parts of the bill. I am not arguing for juvenile rapists to be left to wander the streets unnoticed, but the legislation does reflect the State's concern for property than for freedom. 10-12 year-olds will be jailed for extended periods for crimes which carry adult sentences of 14 years or more. This is supposedly in response to the Jamie Bulger case, but murder and manslaughter are already covered in this way by the law. The extended list would include rape, but burglary and robbery would be more common. Thus existing adult biases regarding property laws will be extended to children. New 'secure training orders' are introduced for 12-14 year-olds who commit persistent offences. The government is thus sanctioning the State-kidnapping of schoolchildren for repeated shoplifting.

Curfews and tagging represent another class-biased action. The previous trials were restricted to people with access to a phone. No phone and you're more likely to be locked up. If you're homeless or a traveller or live in a hostel where they don't want to work with curfews, then you're not going to have this option.

Curfews are also connected with another aspect of this bill — cost-cutting. Curfews are cheap. So are private prison escorts, juries not being kept in hotels overnight and the new power for police to set bail conditions — something of a mixed blessing as prisoners might accept harsher conditions than magistrates might set in order not to be held overnight.

Victim

Bail represents one of the areas where the original purpose for having a Criminal 'Justice' Bill has been reversed. After the Birmingham Six, the Guildford Four, the Tottenham Three and others had been acquitted after many appeals, the



government set up a Royal Commission to look into 'miscarriages of justice'. However while Runciman and Co. were holding their enquiry and in the period since they reported, the government and the media have been holding a concerted campaign under the slogan "Think of the victim not the criminal" and have been busily digging up stories of teenagers being sent on safari and of social services flying them to court by helicopter. Meanwhile the government showed what it really thought of the victims by slashing the maximum payments in compensation in the name of 'efficiency' and allegedly quicker payment.

So in the name of the victim we are going to have more children in prison, people refused bail when re-arrested by police acting as judge and jury, and the weakening of the right of silence. Of course, this ignores the fact that the majority of famous miscarriages of justice are based on false confessions and the police's desire to make a charge stick to someone convenient. The new laws will just make the situation worse.

Of course, what the victim really wants is not to have been a victim in the first place, and this is where we reach the heart of the ongoing power struggle between the liberal and the right-wing views of crime. The right argue that if a criminal is in jail then he (they normally talk of 'he') isn't out committing more crimes. It also gives the victim — and right-wing numbskulls — the satisfaction that justice has been done.

The liberals like to look at causes of crime. They talk of the underclass and of people in despair. They talk of offenders

ployment figures. The new laws can therefore be seen as a smokescreen to distract attention from the obvious fact that if someone can't afford to look after themselves they are going to steal. No amount of fear of God and moral education is going to change that. Nor will draconian punishment. This can be seen from history books where public hangings and a much greater belief in God than is current today didn't stop people from stealing in order to feed themselves.

Solutions

Where the liberal argument falls down (apart from its being patronising) is that it doesn't go far enough. Agreed that people turn to crime when they have no hope, that they are joyriding when that is all the excitement they can get, that if they cannot earn the money to get the material goods which consumer society values so highly, then they'll get them some other way: but the way to solve this isn't by tinkering with the system, it is by changing it wholesale. The society which gives the people the most say in their lives, which gives the same opportunities to all, is the anarchist communist one. And so one answer to the question of how anarchist communist society will deal with crime is that it won't exist, or at least to the same extent. Before you dismiss this answer as totally flippant think of travellers and squatters and what they face.

The new law will extend the Public

Order Act so that groups of six or more traveller vehicles parked without permission can be ordered to move by the police. The law will now cover public highways. It will give the powers to seize people's vehicles (their homes) and charge them the cost of impounding. The government is simultaneously withdrawing the duty and the funding for councils to provide legal sites for travellers. Squatters will have to leave within 24 hours of a court hearing or the police can arrest them. The government is also likely to allow the hearings to be held in the absence of the respondents, giving squatters less time to prepare their moves and allowing unscrupulous landlords the option of having police evict their lawful tenants. There is already inadequate provision for homeless people, particularly those without children or identified special needs. This means people are forced to sleep rough or in inadequate shelters or bed and breakfast, or they can break the law by occupying some of the 860,000 empty homes in towns and cities, or some of the empty land provided by EC set-aside policy in the countryside. I know what choice I would make in their position and that choice would not be thought of as wrong in a society that valued people and helping each other over land and property. Virtually every section of the Bill should be opposed. Much of the opposition will come from liberal organisations like Liberty, but this should not deter anarchist revolutionaries from mobilising. What

SQUALL

Magazine for squatters and the homeless. For up-to-date info on the attacks on squatters and the homeless and the fightback. Free. Send an A5 SAE to Squall, 2 St Paul's Road, London N1 2QN.

Fact: There are 818,000 empty homes in the UK. (Department of Environment figure, April '92, quoted in *Squall*.)

should also be considered is what to do if the Bill becomes law. Many anarchists will be affected. They are squatters or travellers or they are involved in hunt sabbing. How will squatters and travellers react to the law? How can they defend themselves? And how can those who are not directly affected best support them? And how will our own activities be affected?

Readers interested in supporting squatters should contact *Squall* (see box on this page). More info on miscarriages of justice from *Conviction* PO BOX 522 Sheffield S1 3FF and Innocent Dept 54, 1 Newton St, Piccadilly, Manchester M1 1HW and from the *Anarchist Black Cross Bulletin* from London ABC c/o 121 Bookshop, 121 Railton Road, London SE24. All these organisations are short of money and would appreciate donations.



Abortion: some concerns

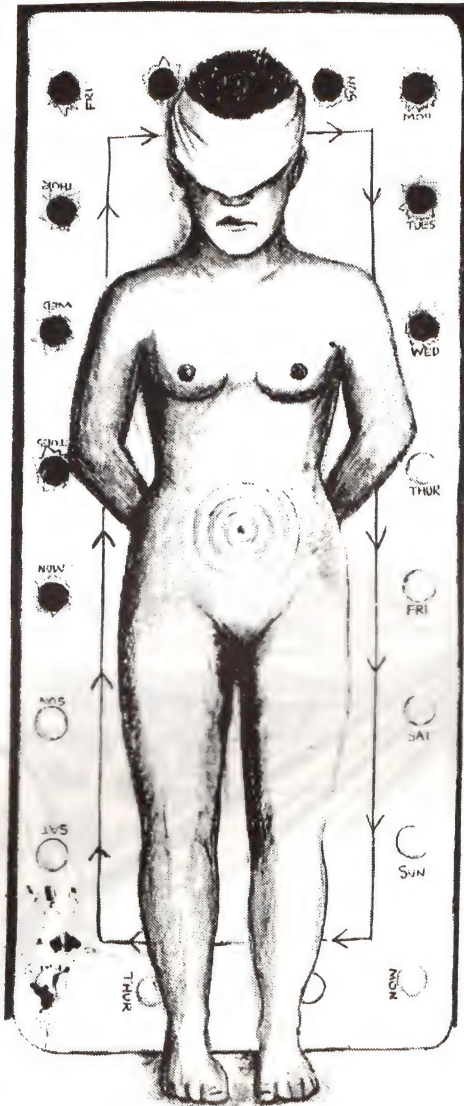
THE CONTROL OF a woman's fertility must be in her own hands. To place that fertility into the hands of obstetric 'expertise' is another argument which also needs debate but we must recognise that its premises are different.

It is not enough to dismiss those of us with concerns about an industry which embodies a male ethic and the state legislative body interfering and controlling female functions as closet Catholics. The history of medicine under capitalism is a history of distorted ethical practice, money making and human damage. It is not within the scope of this article to discuss the extent to which doctors have succeeded in ameliorating the condition of some of those (usually those who can pay) whose diseases would not have such a widespread grip were it not for capitalism in the first place: disease and damage arising out of work conditions, housing, environmental pollution, foodstuffs, community breakdown, marriage, family and social life. What I would like to discuss is the welfare and safety of women, without having the accusation of sexual fascist or prude levelled at me — a response which often follows close upon any rejection of female sexuality as an industry, be it in reproduction or pornography.

Hidden

I believe it is possible to work for the return of female fertility to that female community of knowledge where it traditionally rested. The back-street abortionist, whose re-emergence is the threat which fires the surgery campaign, is, it is agreed, unqualified and usually a local woman. But here we have women whose body of knowledge, orally transmitted, has been confiscated to allow for the development of male expertise. This confiscation has been achieved via 'education', community dislocation, disparagement of the female, religion and direct persecution when the brewers of remedies were tortured, hanged or cast out as witches.

It is obvious that contraception and abortion have been available to women throughout history in all manner of societies. Because the history of the non-powerful is rarely documented, we might conclude that the rarity of large families in the ancient civilisations could be due to the easy availability of insemination receptacles to the man of wealth and position: slaves, workers, concubines, mistresses, servants, prostitutes. The history of anthropology points to a traditional reluctance to chronicle their medicinal success, since this is the women's province. We do know, however, about circumcisors, rites-of-passage surgeons, witch doctors, voodoo priests, bone pointers and spell casters whose practices do not seem



to involve the control of fertility in societies like, for example, the Amerindian whose known spokespeople rarely seemed to have more than three siblings.

John M. Riddle's book *Contraception & Abortion from the Ancient World to the Renaissance* looks at contraceptives and abortifacients in ancient 'civilisations', from which we can conclude that the multifarious herbal remedies catalogued must have been available to aboriginal peoples: the remedies include such common plants as buttercup, blackberries, crocus, mint, willow, garlic, wild carrot, fennel, gentian and celery. He comments on the confusion amongst (male) ancient writers, such as Hippocrates, on the question of herbal remedies, an indication of their dependence upon a female oral tradition lost as medical knowledge becomes concentrated in the universities. An awareness of the curative properties of plants would arise from their culinary use — another diminishing area of female expertise. Pamela Wells, reviewing Riddle's book in *The TLS* (Jan 22nd) suggests that "a woman's solace may have been her

control over own life". Rosalind Petchesky (*Abortion and Women's Choice*) speaks of abortion as either obstetrically organised or unsafe: she claims that the 'ascent' from purgations, potions and poisons to vacuum aspiration can only be seen as a gain for women. We must consider two points in this context:

- The distinction between a 'potion' brewed and administered in the light of a woman's own knowledge and the traditional knowledge of the women of her community, and the mixture of gin and household bleach swigged in a back kitchen is not drawn. Nor are we offered any information on the comparative damage done to women physically and emotionally amongst those who have aborted traditionally and those who have had vacuum aspiration, induced labour or D&C (or perhaps a combination of these) done to them.
- Have the priorities of medicine under capitalism ever been the well-being of people in general and of women in particular?

We must distinguish here between our revulsion at the exclusion on biological grounds of any group from institutions to which those so classed are not allowed admittance; and our tendency to wish those institutions prolonged so that they may admit all equally. Whilst rejecting discrimination of any sort, how many of us would wish to strengthen the US Army, the Dutch Reform Church, the Garrick Club by fighting for the recruitment of gays, blacks and women into their ranks?

Medicalisation

Whilst allowing that women are actively prevented because of pregnancy and childrearing from pursuing their lives according to their wishes (I am not touching upon those women for whom childbirth means damage or death — although I appreciate that even this is not grounds for abortion in some countries), to extend the medical profession's already insidious hold over our biological existence is not the answer. We are already harmed by the intrusion of the medical and quasi-medical industries into our lives: we have coils and pills, creams and 'foaming agents', HRT, obstetrics, milk suppressants — some with terrible effects — and substitutes, post-parturition medication, and, owing to the despised nature of the menses — 'discreet' sanitary wear and tampons, to say nothing of sprays and sanitary items for times of non-menstruation. The treatment of post-natal depression as an individual hormonal reaction to childbirth,

Continued on page 14

MAKING TROUBLE: Interview with Bad Attitude

ORGANISE! USUALLY concentrates on giving an anarchist communist analysis of issues, both past and present. However, in the ACF we are also involved in political activity and the pages of *Organise!* don't always reflect our activism. This interview is an attempt to show what people with broadly similar ideas to ours are actually doing. It is particularly important to show what women are doing, as their activities are often neglected in the mainstream anarchist press.

Bad Attitude has been going for a little over a year. The paper has had considerable success and the ideas of the women who produce it should be of interest to all those who claim to want an anarchist revolution, with the abolition of all exploitation and oppression. The interview was conducted with two members of the **Bad Attitude Collective** and they do not claim to represent the views of *Bad Attitude* as a whole.

Organise!: What motivated you to start up the paper?

Rosanne: We thought that there wasn't much on offer in terms of women's publications that had what we wanted to read: that would have humour, a class struggle orientation and be feminist.

Katy: For me there wasn't much around in general in terms of left or anarchist or feminist type publications that covered much international news. I really wanted to get something that would do that.

Trouble

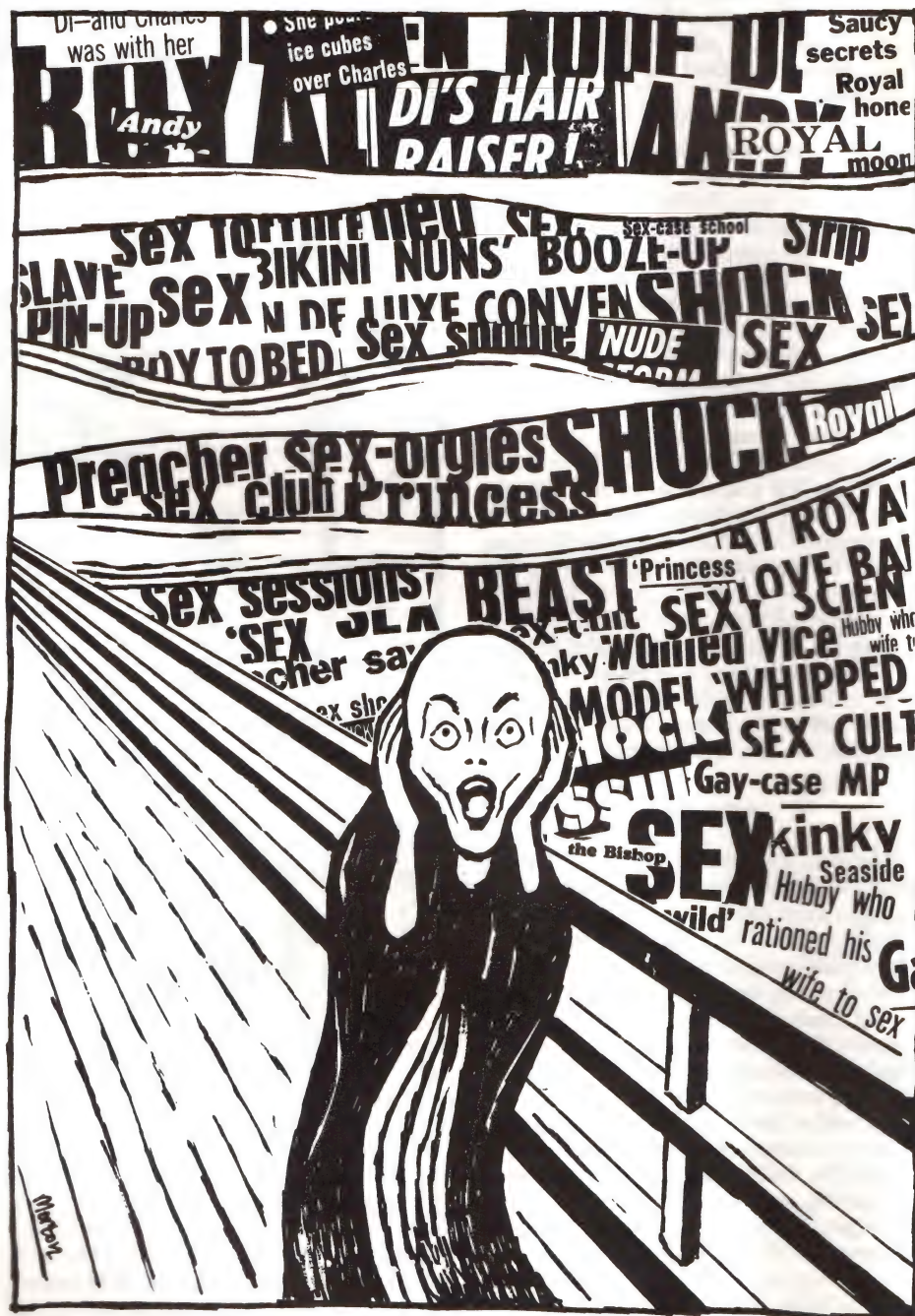
Organise!: What do you hope to achieve by publishing *Bad Attitude*?

R: We hope it makes trouble and that it provides a forum for women who don't have anywhere to say what they want to say. A couple of us who have done writing before have found it difficult to get anything radical published that doesn't fall into the established ideologies. It's a forum where women's struggles can be publicised but it's also meant to entertain.

K: Definitely spread more news and information. Stories that we run in *Bad Attitude* are often picked up by other publications. We can see slight snowballs with the information getting passed on.

Organise!: How do you get articles for *Bad Attitude* and do you have an editorial policy?

R: There are only five of us on the Collective but maybe twenty people write various bits and pieces. We don't operate on a



commission basis. When we get the morning post and there's an article then we're really excited.

K: We're aiming for a reasonable amount of diversity in what can be expressed as long as it has got politics that we consider decent. We're not trying to keep stuff to a really narrow line that only the Collective can contribute to.

R: I think we have some criteria about selecting articles. We don't have an editorial policy in terms of us all having to agree with what's in the article. We might have some queries to the author and have some dialogue about it.

Organise!: Do you have any way of helping people to write articles?

K: Yes, we have a sheet of guidelines that we give to contributors. Partly it's about politics and partly it's about writing style. We try not to have stuff that's impossibly academic or wordy.

R: We also have volunteers meetings for women who are interested in contributing in some way. They can come to these meetings and discuss their ideas.

Organise!: What are your priorities in terms of types of articles — activist rather than theoretical?

R: Yes, mainly activist. But actually I would like to see more theoretical articles that are not removed from activity. There's a danger of simply reporting various struggles but not developing any understanding of how they come together and their relationship to each other.

News

Organise!: Where do you get your information from? You seem to be able to get 'real', first-hand news.

R: There is a tradition of anarchist journalism which involves rewriting articles from the *Guardian* and then tacking on something at the end about the working class uniting and smashing the state, a few slogans to anarchify it. We do try and avoid that. We try to contact the people who are taking part in struggles. This can often be a roundabout process: go to a meeting and then there is a friend of a friend who is involved or they have contacts somewhere. It does take quite a lot of tracking down and following leads. We also have various international exchange publications so sometimes we get information from there.

K: It's a bit difficult when it comes to things happening outside Britain. So for that a lot of the time we're relying on these publications.

R: Or else you have to ask a friend from

another country and get them to ring up their mum and see what their mum says and then write it up.

Organise!: How would you sum up your politics?

K: Feminist first and foremost. It's not strictly anarchist. Some in the group would call themselves anarchist, some wouldn't.

R: Anti-authoritarian, anti-state — everyone would agree with that. Also class struggle.

K: Both class and race politics.

Organise!: Feminism is often seen as a dirty word in some circles, how would you define it?

K: Recognition that women are oppressed in the current system and fighting against it.

Antagonistic

Organise!: In the ACF we often talk about what sort of society we would like to see. Do you have ideas or goals about what society you would like to create?

K: In general in the revolutionary movement there's a lack of discussion of this. It's such reactionary times that it's quite easy just to get caught up in political criticism.

R: But basically we'd like to see a world without capitalism, without the state, where everything is done co-operatively and non-hierarchically.

K: In the current period to talk about Britain and revolution in the same breath seems unthinkable.

Organise!: How do you see yourselves in the wider political movement?

K: We're obviously quite different from liberal feminists. But in discussions with anarchists, male anarchists, there can be a bit of an antagonistic relationship. Not that there's not a willingness to exchange and debate but it is not always smooth going. Sometimes I just can't believe it, however many years of feminism. Politicos who know everything — politics is their life — about economics or workplace struggles just don't know anything about women's liberation. The nerve of people to be so uninformed!

R: It's a way of avoiding dealing with the issues. They know all about what Marx and Bakunin said to each other in 18 whatever or about the different splits in the CNT — all the obscure stuff. Then if you bring up a women's issue they say that working class people aren't exposed to these sorts of things. Feminism is a middle class concern or else they'll say it's intellectual.

Bollocks

Organise!: How do you respond to that, that feminism is middle class?

K: I think it's just bollocks. I find it hard to take. There's enough in the left or anarchist movement that's dominated by the middle class. As far as I'm concerned, women are oppressed full stop and that's working class women. There's working class women fighting on a number of issues. I read a survey that said more working class than middle class women would call themselves feminists. I just think it's name calling from the boys. I think it's just an excuse for them to be dead fucking comfortable and take no notice.

Organise!: What criticisms would you make of anarchist organisations like the ACF or Class War?

R: *Organise!* has some good articles but the lay-out could be a bit zippier. Articles in all anarchist publications tend to be sex-blind. If you're writing about a strike and there's women involved, then it's a women's issue and you should be writing about how women are involved. If you're writing about a struggle in another country then you should write about how it's affecting women. It shouldn't be: this article is about women because it's about abortion. Just about anything is a women's issue. I want women's role to be a central part of the analysis.

K: In terms of race as well. In *Class War* they might write about Asian lads doing street fighting rather than Asian women.

R: I've had contact with *Class War* and it's just a lad's organisation. I've met some women who are trying to do some

"That's no lady!"



worthwhile things within the organisation but it seems a lost cause.

K: When we spoke at their rally — Communities of Resistance — we found that they had this sentimental attitude towards the working class family as if it was a real wholesome unit, some healthy thing that grows out of the soil.

Organise! How do you see the relationship between sexual and class oppression?

R: Mutually reinforcing.

K: Women's oppression is the most convenient thing in the world for capitalism. Children are brought up for free so you can pay people shit. It goes the other way as well. It's great for men to have jobs that pay more and to have women working 24 hours a day for them and their children. You need to fight both and if you're talking world-wide then we need to talk about fighting imperialism and international capitalism and racial oppression.

Organise! If men are part of the problem, how are they going to change?

K: Lots of grief from women: lots of trouble. It means women having an autonomous base of their own, supporting each other and taking on struggles as women. When women organise as women then men have to take notice. I wouldn't call it separatism. It's more autonomy.

Organise! Do you think we can talk about a women's movement at the moment?

R: I think there's the remnants of a women's movement and a potential women's movement. I don't think it's come together yet.

K: There's quite a lot going on in terms of groups and organisations and activity but it's very fragmented.

R: There's various campaigns like Justice for Women and then there's women's centres and a number of different collectives working on various projects but there's not a sense of being part of one movement.

Offensive

Organise! What are the main ways that women are oppressed? What do they need to fight around?

R: One of the obvious things is the state offensive against single mothers. It reflects the reassertion of 'family values' and the hierarchy of the family with women doing their motherly bit. Internationally, there's a resurgence of religious fundamentalism in both east and west which has a lot of implications for women. Economic austerity is even worse for women because it means more work looking after the kids. Cross the board cuts in services mean that women have to bear the brunt. Another area is the exploitation of women workers. With the closing down and dispersion of heavy industry, a lot of work is done in smaller workplaces or sweatshops where the workers are female — often Black and Asian women.

K: When we look at what's going on to do articles, we notice that in the major

strikes now — Timex, Middlebrook Mushrooms — women workers are very central. Then, on the other hand, wageless women face other kinds of harassment.

Organise! What do you think could be done to get things going on a bigger scale?

K: I think it helps that there's better dissemination of information. Something like *Bad Attitude* is relatively small compared to something like the *Sun*. It's like a drop in the ocean.

Organise! How can *Bad Attitude* help?

R: By helping spread the knowledge that people are not isolated, that there are women doing things that they can find out about.

Organise! Do you see the paper as mak-

ing a contribution to a future revolution? **R:** That's our ambition, our hope. By providing the information that's suppressed, by covering struggles that are suppressed, providing a forum for these struggles and helping overcome their isolation; all that contributes.

K: When we were first scheming about *Bad Attitude* one of the first things we said is that we are aiming for the overthrow of civilisation as we know it.

Organise! What are your immediate plans?

R: We'd like to keep it going, get wider distribution, get it out to more people and continue making trouble.

Subscribe to *Bad Attitude*. 121 Railton Road, London SE24 0LR.

ABORTION: cont from p11

treatable through medication and hospitalisation, places childbirth within the realm of the individual woman despite the involvement of others at official level; her response is designated by them as abnormal although childbirth has never been one woman's affair.

This may lead us to look at why some women at least choose to abort. The lonely nature of a woman's responsibility for childrearing even within a partnership could lead her to decide that she does not want another child, cannot afford this one, cannot / does not want to be outside of the social/economic interaction of which she is presently part. Germaine Greer sees Western society as fixing a woman's image at an impossible stage: that of pre-parturient adolescence. Naked societies encompass the swelling woman into their aesthetics, seeing the full-bellied woman as being at the pinnacle of her physical development. She also suggests that Western societies do not like children, and we can see daily how diminishing are the uses current capitalism must have for them. Surgical abortion can, then, be seen as society's confirmation that conception and its aftermath is a woman's solitary business in which a man can choose whether or not to be supportive.

Within private medicine and the quasi medical industries that serve state systems, it is always beneficial to treat where it is not necessary: profit and misogyny have prompted surgeons to operate unnecessarily, remove more tissue than is essential, or deny pain relief. My own catalogue of treatments at the hands of the private systems of countries where I have lived include: being given an epidural after 'crowning' i.e. when the baby's head is through. (My efforts to resist resulted in the epidural being given under duress and back damage being suffered); a plastic device being fitted to fix a 'wandering womb', the supposed cause of my back pain; cauterisation for a perfectly normal vaginal function; episiotomies and

enemas being given despite protests; milk suppressants only to be administered before birth being prescribed after delivery for a breast infection; the prescription of known carcinogens for a supposed vaginal infection; the recommendation of an abortion when I was not pregnant; the physical attempt to wrest my baby from me (in a Nestlé funded hospital) because my breast milk was 'unsuitable'; and the exorbitant payment for a natural childbirth as the only alternative to Caesarian delivery, appointments for which were made for friends and neighbours on the day of their pregnancy diagnosis — a Caesarian for a first delivery, expensive and convenient, ensures that all subsequent deliveries will be expensive and convenient too.

Pragmatic

Women who want to end their pregnancies cannot wait: they cannot wait while women regain their former roles as guardians of remedial knowledge within the community; nor can they afford to experiment without that body of knowledge firmly behind them: Riddle described the death and illness of two women who attempted to dose themselves on a common herb. We acknowledge the weaknesses in police procedure that allows a man to beat his wife unhindered. When we press for change we are all too aware that our desire to protect women is extending the powers of the police with possible terrible consequences. We may have no choice but the need for debate and awareness does not go away.

Riddle claims that anti-fertility remedies are still being widely used in traditional societies, and the surveys that claim, for example, that over 90% of Bangladeshi women do not use contraception, are 'arrogant' since users of herbal methods become 'non-users'. Whilst the debate on who shall regulate and be regulated, who shall be liberated and in what way, who shall be blamed and punished goes on throughout history women, have been quietly attending to the matter themselves.

Reviews

Tribal Messenger. 38 pages. £2 from Tribal Messenger, Box 21, 113 Grosvenor Rd, St Paul's, Bristol, Avon BS2 (+ donation for p&p).

This special edition is an excellent informative update of the present situation of gypsies and New Age travellers, and destroys a lot of the myths and ignorance about them espoused in the media. It uncovers the prejudiced and racist history of the treatment of gypsies down the centuries. Many travellers were homeless and unemployed, trying to escape inner city dereliction and poverty. In the last 12 years this situation has become exacerbated and the arrival of masses of weekend ravers from the towns at the festivals has provoked reaction from police and locals. The travellers have been used as a scapegoat by the government, to distract attention from the recession, and an assault has been launched on their alternative culture and sense of community. There are a good selection of press clippings and photos and some very interesting letters and articles including the police's *Hippy Watch* and an editorial in *Police Review* condemning the new legislation as inappropriate! Altogether good value for money and definitely worth reading.

No Master High or Low. John Shotton. 304 pages. £7.95. Lib Ed.

On the one hand this book

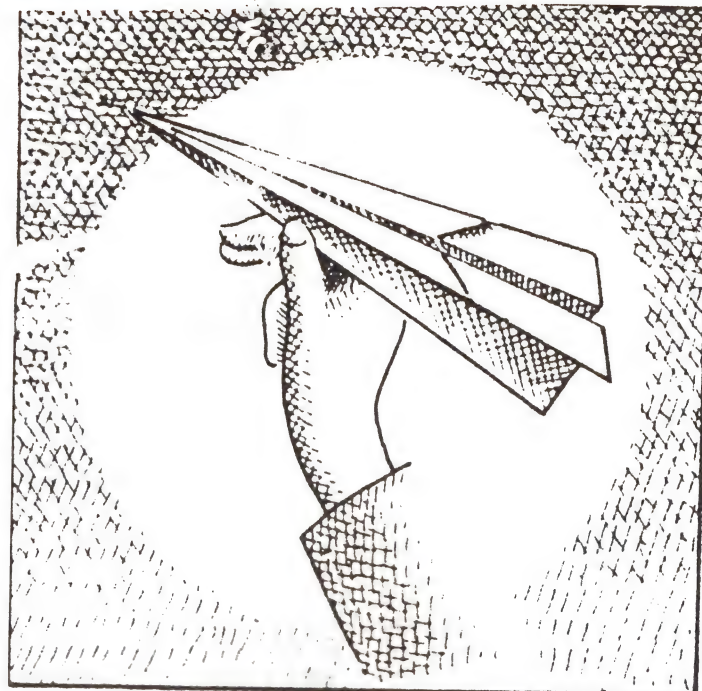
is both informative and uplifting in chronicling the development of libertarian approaches to education. On the other, it makes depressing, if instructive reading, when it comes to discussing the eventual and almost inevitable failures of such approaches in the state sector.

The State moved into education towards the end of the 19th century to ensure conformity and improve the abilities of workers in line with the needs of capitalism. It is against the imposition of educational straightjackets and the stifling of curiosity that libertarians conducted their efforts.

Of course, in doing so, they ran into the powerful opposition of central and local government, reactionary teachers, and often, parents. Sadly, after periods of struggle and uncertainty, the authoritarians almost always won.

Anyone with anarchist views who works or studies in the State sector will be aware of the difficulties. What is inspiring about this book is the degree of success which some schools achieved, against overwhelming odds. So, this book is both a warning and an inspiration. Everyone remotely connected with the educational system (all of us!) should read this well-written and detailed work.

A Lie Too Far. Searchlight, Hepple, and the Left. 56 pages. Mina Enterprises.



£1.60. From BM Box 4769. London WC1N 3XX.

Over the last few months the revolutionary left has been disrupted and distracted by an apparently fascist orchestrated campaign to create distrust and suspicion between individuals and groups and to discredit and smear certain groups and individuals particularly Tim Scargill of Class War.

This book describes in detail how it believes that this campaign to discredit revolutionaries was in fact orchestrated by Gerry Gable (*Searchlight*) for the secret services and how figures like Tim Hepple and Ray Hill have for years been infiltrating and disrupting groups on the far right and the revolutionary left, under Gable's direction.

The evidence and conclusions of this book are that *Searchlight* is not an asset to the anti-fascist movement but is in fact a tool used by the State to discredit individuals and groups on the revolutionary left, to spread disinformation, and to gather intelligence for the State. The book covers the whole story of *Searchlight's* campaign of disinformation and does a remarkable job of describing a conspiracy of incredible complexity in a relatively easy to understand manner.

Carry On Recruiting! Why the Socialist Workers Party dumped the 'downturn' in a 'dash for growth' and other party pieces. Trotwatch/AK Press. £2.95. 48pp.

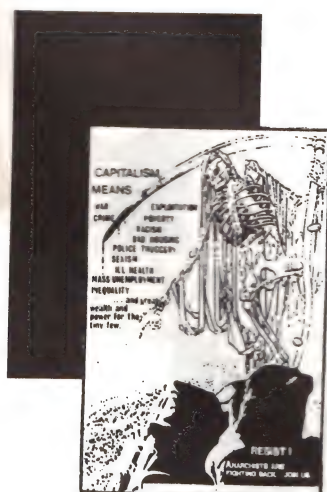
Trotwatch portray an SWP whose analysis of events fluctuates with the leadership's views of what will best gain them members. Far from living up to the 'ideal' of the Leninist party which leads the class through its superior knowledge and understanding, the SWP is shown to be reactive and to cynically dump policies as they become unpopular.

The 'downturn' of the pamphlet's subtitle was the SWP's analysis of how working class militancy declined with the last Labour government's 'betrayal' of the class and the rise of Thatcherism. This downturn persisted through the period in which the Bennite Labour left appeared to gain control of the party, and contin-

Posters and stickers

BUNDLES of this poster can be obtained from the London address for a donation. Or get a single copy and photocopy 'em. London ACF also have a small concertina leaflet explaining the basic ideas of anarchist communism. Donation for a bundle to above address.

Our last lot of six different stickers has sold out. So we've produced a new series of nine different stickers (anti-capitalist, anti-fascist, ecology etc). Again, bundles can be obtained from London address, if you enclose a donation.



ued through Militant's and the Labour left's 'municipal socialism' and the miners' strike of '84/85. For the SWP the Poll Tax rebellion was illusory, the workplace being the only true battleground for the class struggle — that was until even Tony Cliff couldn't deny the non-payment campaign's success and claimed the SWP was in on it from the beginning.

Fall of Stalinism

But by the end of '92, Kincock had destroyed the credibility of the Labour Party. The fall of East European Stalinism had brought down many of the SWP's rivals and Militant was in schism as Taafe dumped Ted Grant along with his entryism. So the SWP began to grow and as the revolutionary party can only make gains in times of class radicalisation the downturn was declared over and the SWP charged off in its 'dash for growth' after as many members as it could get while its rivals were out of the race.

Trotwatch quote extensively from SWP publications to show how the party's analysis of the Poll Tax riots and other events changed with time and how the party adopted a revisionist approach to its own past pronouncements. The fact that the papers contradict themselves from week to week doesn't matter — what is important is that the SWP leadership claim to lead the working class and yet much of the time seem incapable of understanding what's happening within that class. Trotwatch use a document produced in 1991 by rebel members of the Southampton SWP, soon to join the Anarchist Workers' Group, to show how an increasingly centralised party excludes the membership from real debate and so can afford to recruit new members whatever their politics.

The above exposé of the SWP is worth making and Trotwatch are to be praised for ploughing through all those back issues of SWP magazines. However the structure of *Carry on Recruiting!* is somewhat confusing and it seems to have been started in a satirical vein only for the humour to disappear.



One Step Beyond — an examination of the Revolutionary Communist Party published in 1988 was a rather more successful example of Nottingham anarchists' mission to expose the Marxist-Leninist left. There it was clearer that the one party was being attacked just as an example. The cult-like aspects of the party were also brought out more clearly despite the fact that *Carry on Recruiting!* quotes a passage from an SWM (Irish SWP) document on recruiting which Evangelical Christians and Moonies would have been proud of. That said, COR is well worth reading for its exposé of the vacuity behind the market-leader on the (un-) revolutionary left. Whether the students and other young people most likely to be lured by the SWP will read it is another matter.

Forthcoming

John Caldwell had a harsh upbringing in Belfast and Glasgow. His early encounters with Guy Aldred, the veteran anti-parliamentary communist, made a profound impression on him and he became involved in full-time anarchist-communist activity. The first volume of his autobiography is about to appear and will be a valuable contribution to anarchist and social history. The first volume will be (provisionally) £4.95 plus post. Orders can be placed via the publishers, Northern Herald Books (6 Lilian St, Bradford, W. Yorkshire BD4 9LP, tel 0274 685158) or with AK Distribution, 22 Lutton Place Edinburgh EH8 9PE, tel: 031 667 1507.

Letters

Local organisations

Dear *Organise!*

I was surprised to read your sectarian attack on local organisations such as 'Solidarity' groups in *Organise!* 30. In Haringey the Solidarity groups are an attempt to carry on some of the political network built up by the successful local anti-Poll Tax movement. The alternative would be to go back to square one every time a single issue campaign came to an end. Contrary to your article these groups have not all collapsed. The four groups in Haringey are involved in a range of anti-Poll Tax and anti-fascist work, campaigns against the child-support act and Workfare and environmental issues. There are undoubtedly many problems — but they are not the theoretical ones that your magazine suggests. We hope that other activists in the anti-Poll Tax movement will set up non-sectarian libertarian socialist/anarchist organisations in their own areas, like the group in Leeds that was recently set up with the support of ACF members.

yours in solidarity
S (Wood Green, London)

PS The addresses of our local solidarity groups are Haringey Solidarity Groups c/o PO Box 2401, Hornsey, London N8 9LR.

Eds reply: Sorry, but you seem to have misread the article. We said: "We are all for the establishment of local co-

ordinations that enable revolutionaries to pool their efforts and resources". We did not say that all Solidarity Groups had collapsed.

We said: "Many local Solidarity Groups have . . . collapsed". Yes, you're right, ACF members helped set up Leeds Solidarity Group (collapsed late '93) as well as the now-defunct Hackney and Tower Hamlets Solidarity Groups.

We stand by what we said in the article. Local organisation is necessary, but if it is put forward as the solution to the present lack of progress of revolutionary anarchists, and indeed actively counterpoised to the establishment of a national revolutionary anarchist organisation, then we think this is an error.

The problem is theoretical. It is the strategy of localism versus the building of a national revolutionary organisation.

Cuba

Dear *Organise!*

I found *Organise!* 31 extremely interesting and informative. How about an article on the situation in Cuba?

A.O. (Warrington)

Eds reply: We intend to publish an in-depth article on Cuba in a forthcoming issue, in particular as many Lost Boys of Stalinism and Trotskyism are fetishising Cuba as a last bastion of "Socialism".



ACTIVE RESISTANCE

OUT NOW! SECOND ISSUE OF *Active Resistance*, the ACF paper for young people. 40p a copy plus postage. A few copies of the first issue are still available. Write to London address for copies, bulk orders.

Tory economics

Dear *Organise!*

When the capitalist controlled mining industry was threatening to use miners' pension funds for redundancy pay-offs, how far removed were they from the con-man tactics of Maxwell? They vilified Maxwell for doing typical capitalist dirty work, but they sent "the Cypriot" a retirement watch! They hated Maxwell because he dared to support the Labour Party not because he was a con-man. All capitalists are con-men by definition.

The Tories use New Age travellers, single mothers, the unemployed as scapegoats but they never focus their attention on the gigantic swindle of offshore tax concessions, arms deals, tax frauds and the colossal costs of supporting privatised accommodation by paying out money to extortionate landlords. The meagre food allowance is frequently less or as much as a rented bed-sit for the unemployed, not the landlord system, and their economic system creates both! Capitalism has and always will rely on slavery, unemployment and poverty. Capitalism is international and it thrives on racism, class, and the abject misery of South African and Brazilian style neo-slavery,

yours in solidarity,
A.A. (Edinburgh)

Confused

Dear *Organise!*

To some extent we are all burdened by our use of language, and certain words together with what they mean to different people.

Anarchy has been generally accepted to be something completely different to that which Anarchists would mean using the same word. The use of many words from commu-

nist, to freedom, from democracy to socialism, are bastardised by common usage promulgated by the media.

In *Organise!* 31 a letter on the trade union issue confused unions with Trade Unions and thus came to a confused conclusion. Had the letter confined itself to Trade Unions, then its conclusions would have been more clear. This jumble is also evident in your aims and principles, where unions and Trade Unions are lumped together to be and mean the same. For those of us who are Anarchists-Syndicalists this misrepresentation is no different to the establishment who portray us all as insane criminals out to bomb, kill, rape and pillage.

Trade Unions are all that you say they are, whereas unions can be completely different organisations. Your correspondent, JC of Sheffield, claimed that "revolutionaries must... oppose new unions" and yet went on to advocate support for a whole list of 'groups' from the unemployed to claimants, taking care never to use the word union, even when the 'groups' themselves may use the title union. This strange bigotry against anything calling itself a union is plainly deliberate or just blind dogma.

I myself have spent 25 years of my life as an active Trade Unionist, many as a full facility convenor, which I think gives me some experience of just what Trade Unions are. The TUC Trade Unions, together with the Labour Party are all clearly anti-working class and an integral part of the capitalist establishment. I now take the revolutionary union cause with the anarcho-syndicalists as a member of the Direct Action Movement which advocates revolutionary unions along the lines of the Spanish CNT.

Most workers know that Trade Unions are a load of crap yet they still hang on in there, this is partly because many recognise that organis-

ing together, collectively, i.e. uniting, is the first step to taking on the capitalist bastards. What this organisation is called is somewhat a secondary issue, and your confusion of Trade Unions (TUC Affiliates) with unions needs some more thought on your part.

B.M. (Bath)

Eds reply: Over the last couple of years we have defined and clarified our position on the unions. We, of course, reject the trade unions. But we also have deep criticisms of anarcho-syndicalism.

At one point anarcho-syndicalism transcended the small group politics of anarchist groups, and the rigid legalism and reformism of the Marxist Social Democratic Parties, basing itself on direct action and mass mobilisation. But even at this stage there were many problems with it. For example, Spanish anarchist communists entered the anarcho-syndicalist CNT with many reservations.

Problems lie in the failure of anarcho-syndicalism to recognise the need for a specific anarchist communist organisation, and for even a revolutionary union to be enmeshed in negotiations with the boss class, and to hold the working class back. There were always problems in the CNT between the anarchist communists organised in the Federacion Anarquista Iberica, the revolutionary syndicalists, and the pure unionists.

All three factions were in continuous antagonism, with some overlap between them. Anarcho-syndicalism always believed in the need for the action of an enlightened majority leading the mass of unenlightened workers, particularly within the French CGT.

This may explain to a great extent why so many anarcho-syndicalists on an international level went over to the Communist Parties, and were to be found as founder members and on the CP executives. Spanish anarcho-syndicalism failed the test in 1936 when it entered the Republican government, and when its leaders colluded with the forces of reaction in calling for the revolutionary workers to lay down their arms during the May Days in Barcelona in 1937.

There are many important lessons to be learnt from anar-

cho-syndicalism and revolutionary syndicalism. We feel, however, that these forms of organisation have been transcended. That is why we reject the unions, all unions, and call for the establishment of revolutionary groups that organise not only in the workplace but in the neighbourhood.

Crusty types?

Dear ACF

I've just read my first issue of your paper *Organise!* My first impression was that you're preaching to the converted. To carry on from the letter by FK of East London (*Organise!* 31) I feel your paper is aimed at the crusty dog on a string types. I feel a lot of white working class turn to fascism because they feel the same. I'm a white socks, trainers and trendy haircut type (although I draw the line with the gold jewellery) as are most of my mates. I also feel the fact that you will see Asians and blacks living very comfortably plays a very big part (Capitalists are black too) I mean, it's something real, in front of your eyes. What you can't see is how the rich and powerful play their game of Divide and Rule so if it's not there to see you're not going to know it exists.

I became involved with Anarchism through the Class War newspaper although I feel it does have faults (the copper hating seems pointless, a good piss-take would do). Anyway, what I'm saying is that a lot of working class people associate Anarchy with crusty middle class types. Although there are crusty working class people, they seem to have their own culture and my experience tells me that apart from politics we have very little in common. Still, I liked the paper, particularly the articles on terrorism and Anarchy in the Six Counties,

cheers,
Disco Man (Somewhere
North of London)

Eds reply: No, not many crusties read *Organise!* and if you have a look at the content of *Organise!* you will see that we are orientating towards revolutionary struggle, whether in the neighbourhood, the streets or the workplace.



As regards black and Asian capitalists, well the vast number of black and Asian people in this country are working class, and that is pretty apparent, at least to us. How many black capitalists do you know? Even if what you are saying is true, which it patently isn't, this would not be a justification to discriminate against people because of race. We believe in class solidarity and class unity. Don't be a mug and fall for the crap that the racists come out with. We're opposed to all bosses, whatever their colour. Equally we know that the boss class is colour blind in its exploitation of the vast mass of people on this planet.

Intifada

Greetings,
I am writing in relation to a review in *Organise!* 28 about an Intifada bulletin called *Worldwide Intifada* (since you mentioned sharing the views held by this bulletin, I believe my point concerns you as well). The most intolerable (yet not the only) quotation was one saying that the real conflict is not between Israelis and Palestinians but between the bourgeoisie and the working class. Such an outlook implies an economical point of view, not simply 'materialistic' but solely economic. An explanation or analysis of the social powers and their conflicts is impossible through a strictly economic eyesight — this mistake is, in itself, what

broadly separates Marxian and anarchic socialism.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not an economic conflict, and neither is the Intifada a class war — its strength and potential lie in fact far from it. Explaining massive abnormal psychology, i.e. the continuing appeal of nationalism (the roots of the conflict) with purely economic concepts seems to me as absurd as explaining individual abnormal psychology i.e. madness or depressions, through this economic 'science'.

This conflict was not created nor is it mediated by the flow of capital, circulation or surplus value/labour. The conflict is a nationalistic one, meaning that politically speaking, its roots are in a non-abstract, cultural force. Nationalism, or fascism, explained by house-Marxists as a means of the ruling class to control and disperse anti-capitalist potential, is to say the least, unsatisfactory. Its *raison d'être* is rather an economically abstract factor — the mass psychology of peoples. No 'productive' force causes this, and Ernst Bloch understood it even further than Wilhelm Reich's *Mass Psychology of Fascism*.

The existence of determinant (yet non-economic) psychological forces in social history does not undermine any 'materialistic' point of view whatsoever — it is in fact what is missing from the anarchist critique. Mass psychology is not theoretical at all, and therefore nationalism is neither a "monetary interest

in disguise" nor a political abstraction, but a certain fact. And I am not being as dogmatic as the economic analysts, because I take into account the already undeniable differences between the various armed conflicts. The Iraq-US conflict is an example of a class-originated conflict, a solely economically motivated clash. But different political conflicts do exist such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which is a truly nationalistic conflict. Human history is everything but "solely the history of class war" — a description which gives away the dogmatic blindfold in Marx and Engels' historical outlook. History is filled with inner class conflicts, such as rulers against rulers or proletarians against themselves (a vast majority of the 'civil wars').

As for the natural continuum of the above-mentioned dogmatism, it manifests itself in an objection to the peace talks and to any Palestinian State or autonomous form.

It is not by chance that such a stance pushes you next to the Israeli fascists and to their Israeli Trotskyist parallels. Dogmas in the analysis lead to a dogmatic, 'class war only' solution, which actually negates itself as a valid solution by being dogmatically unrealistic as well as cataclysmic.

War is a process and the class war is no exception. Wars between states are historically short processes of several years. But then again their 'historic role' is extremely small and the damage to the hierarchical status quo is from history's outlook, mostly a modest one.

However the class war's 'historic role' is a totalitarian change, an all or nothing revolution. Hence State armed conflicts may allow themselves a cataclysmic character, while a class war is, by definition, a much longer and complex process — antagonistic to quick cataclysm and to vanguards.

The abolition of slavery, just like Palestinian autonomy, cannot be seen as a direct class war orientated act. It was, in fact (just like the peace talks or a Palestinian State might be) meant to give a boost to capitalism. Yet it was, at the same time, a benefit to capitalists and a step in the progress towards an anarchist society.

A Palestinian state is a slightly ambivalent step in the path to freedom. It may not be the 'desired' cataclysmic change to a libertarian society, but still it is a link within the process chain. In other words it is the 'lesser of two evils'.

Let us support then, the abolition of slavery, the five day working week, the left-wing government's election, the military destruction of Saddam Hussein's empire and support also a Palestinian State — all symptoms of the problem yet part of the solution — capitalist beneficial steps which dialectically serve to destroy capital and build anarcho-communism.

*no war between masses, no
peace between classes*

S.G. (Upper Galilee Anarchist Brigade, Israel)

Eds reply: We had some difficulty understanding what you're saying. Do you mean that the Intifada is purely a nationalist uprising?

We feel that the Intifada involves the uprising of the mass of the Palestinians, and is fettered by the nationalist groups, whether they be different PLO factions or the Iranian-backed fundamentalists of Hamas. It has the potential to break out of the control of these groups, in fact it has done so on several occasions. All of these factions are terrified that it will develop its own autonomy.

As regards supporting the establishment of a Palestinian State, we find it most odd that someone who calls him or herself an anarchist could support this.

This means the PLO leadership around Arafat creating a new State structure and controlling the masses. In no way is it progressive.

We are for the free federation of peoples. Similarly we find horrifying your support of the Allied offensive against Iraq which involved the death and maiming of thousands of people.

Saddam wasn't destroyed, in fact his position was strengthened at home. He was chastised by the US and its allies but allowed to remain to police the region. Witness his attacks on the Marsh Arabs and the Kurds. In fact you seem to have fallen into the trap of 'progress' advanced by some Marxists.

Aims and principles

1. The Anarchist Communist Federation is an organisation of revolutionary class struggle anarchists. We aim for the abolition of all hierarchy, and work for the creation of a world-wide classless society: anarchist communism.

2. Capitalism is based on the exploitation of the working class by the ruling class. But inequality and exploitation are also expressed in terms of race, gender, sexuality, health, ability and age, and in these ways one section of the working class oppresses another. This divides us, causing a lack of class unity in struggle that benefits the ruling class. Oppressed groups are strengthened by autonomous action which challenges social and economic power relationships. To achieve our goal we must relinquish power over each other on a personal as well as a political level.

3. We believe that fighting racism and sexism is as important as other aspects of the class struggle. Anarchist-communism cannot be achieved while sexism and racism still exist. In order to be effective in their struggle against their oppression both within society and within the working class, women and black people may at times need to organise independently. However, this should be as working class women and black people as cross-class movements hide real class differences and

achieve little for them. Full emancipation cannot be achieved without the abolition of capitalism.

4. We are opposed to the ideology of national liberation movements which claims that there is some common interest between native bosses and the working class in face of foreign domination. We do support working class struggles against racism, genocide, ethnocide and political and economic colonialism. We oppose the creation of any new ruling class. We reject all forms of nationalism, as this only serves to redefine divisions in the international working class. The working class has no country and national boundaries must be eliminated. We seek to build an anarchist international to work with other libertarian revolutionaries throughout the world.

5. As well as exploiting and oppressing the majority of people, Capitalism threatens the world through war and the destruction of the environment.

6. It is not possible to abolish Capitalism without a revolution, which will arise out of class conflict. The ruling class must be completely overthrown to achieve anarchist communism. Because the ruling class will not relinquish power without the use of armed force, this revolution will be a time of violence as well as liberation.

7. Unions by their very nature

cannot become vehicles for the revolutionary transformation of society. They have to be accepted by capitalism in order to function and so cannot play a part on its overthrow. Trades unions divide the working class (between employed and unemployed, trade and craft, skilled and unskilled, etc). Even syndicalist unions are constrained by the fundamental nature of unionism. The union has to be able to control its membership in order to make deals with management. Their aim, through negotiation, is to achieve a fairer form of exploitation of the workforce. The interests of leaders and representatives will always be different to ours. The boss class is our enemy, and while we must fight for better conditions from it, we have to realise that reforms we may achieve today may be taken away tomorrow. Our ultimate aim must be the complete abolition of wage slavery. Working within the unions can never achieve this. However, we do not argue for people to leave unions until they are made irrelevant by the revolutionary event. The union is a common point of departure for many workers. Rank and file initiatives may strengthen us in the battle for an anarchist-communism. What's important is that we organise ourselves collectively, arguing for workers to control struggles themselves.

8. Genuine liberation can only come about through the revolutionary self-activity of the working class on a mass scale. An anarchist communist society means not only co-operation between equals, but active involvement in the shaping and creating of that society during and after the revolution. In times of upheaval and struggle, people will need to create their own revolutionary organisations controlled by everyone in them. These autonomous organisations will be outside the control of political parties, and within them we will learn many important lessons of self-activity.

9. As anarchists we organise in all areas of life to try to advance the revolutionary process. We believe a strong anarchist organisation is necessary to help us to this end. Unlike other so-called socialists or communists we do not want power or control for our organisation.

We recognise that the revolution can only be carried out directly by the working class. However, the revolution must be preceded by organisations able to convince people of the anarchist communist alternative and method. We participate in struggle as anarchist communists, and organise on a federative basis. We reject sectarianism and work for a united revolutionary anarchist movement.

JOIN US!

THE CONSERVATIVE government is staggering from crisis to crisis, as much a victim of its hypocrisy over good old family values as over its plans to cut the health service to pieces and close the pits. The Labour Party, in its efforts to transform itself into a US-style Democrat Party, has lost any shred of 'socialist' credibility it still had.

In many areas the Party is dead on its feet, with only a number of activists of over 60 running the branches. This collapse of the Labour Party will continue, with little chance of election victory. This may eventually force it into an electoral alliance with the Liberal Democrats, whose policies now differ little from

their own. If this were to happen, this alliance would campaign on electing a government of 'National Salvation'. This would not be very different from the present Tory government and would attempt to control a population ever more discontented as the economic decline and decay of Britain continued.

As for the fascist BNP, they lacked the organisational know-how to fully profit from their Millwall victory and still remain on the margins, still dreaming that they can exploit the vacuum in British politics. If the economic crisis continues, and no credible revolutionary alternative is on offer, they may have the chance to grow. At the moment, they are only needed by the British State to organise attacks on radicals and to al-

low the British State to implement more racist policies. Witness the recent detention of passengers from a flight from Jamaica.

Vacuum

The SWP for its part, is filling the vacuum left by the almost complete extinction of the Communist Party, and the collapse of the Labour Left. In the process they may well gobble up their main rival Militant.

Their role under British capitalism, is to pose as a viable alternative, and to enmesh a substantial number of people with an anti-capitalist outlook in a commandist organisation that is still tied to Labourism. They will continue to call for a vote for Labour at forthcoming elections

and to further illusions in the unions.

So what real alternative is there? What alternative for those sickened by this rotting society, whose highest cultural forms seem to be Mr Blobby and Blind Date? The anarchist movement in this country has failed to take advantage of the most favourable conditions for many years and remains trapped in its ghettos. Consistent and untiring propaganda and development of theory are required, as well as the need to break with the politics of the stunt and of localism.

A national revolutionary organisation is needed. We in the ACF are working towards this.

If you agree with these perspectives, then think seriously of joining us.

INTERNATIONALISM

INTERNATIONALISM, THE solidarity of revolutionaries across national boundaries, is a key part of working class struggle.

The last two hundred years or so has seen national states glorifying patriotism and nationalism. As a tool of social control it has been very effective, indeed millions of people have sacrificed their lives for the national cause.

The First and Second World Wars are just the clearest examples of a continual process of aggression carried out by nation states against their rivals.

Collapse

As Leninist 'communism' has collapsed all over the world, the ideological gap has been to a large extent filled by nationalism. This is carried to an absurd degree in countries like the former Yugoslavia, where statelet confronts statelet, all in the name of national pride and self-determination.

Yet this nationalism which has been so powerful in the 20th century goes against the whole development of capitalism. If nothing else, capitalism is internationalist, at least as far as the major corporations are concerned. These enterprises are huge, employ hundreds of thousands of workers in several countries and often possess capital in excess of some of the world's second rank nations. Firms like ICI, Esso, General Motors, Coca Cola, Sony etc., whilst being based within nation states, owe no country loyalty. Their goal is growth and increased profits. They are unwilling to be held back by mere national governments.

Partly in recognition of this fact of capitalist life and partly to secure the domination of the world's markets, once again major imperialist rivalries are beginning to emerge. The Canadian-USA-Mexican free trade agreement, the EC, and the courting by Japan of countries around the Pacific Rim, are all aimed at securing domination of the world's markets.

Unity

For these reasons alone, it is vital that the revolutionary working class movement looks for unity. However, workers' internationalism is not simply a response to the international threat of capitalism. Internationalism dates back to the 19th century, especially to the formation of the International Workingmen's (sic) Association (The First International).

There was a recognition of the need for international revolution and thus the necessity of an internationally-organised revolutionary movement. Despite the



"Workers of all countries unite—or I'll shoot!"

cynical manipulation of socialists such as Marx, who preferred to wreck the First International rather than let it fall under the influence of the anarchist Bakunin's supporters, and the patriotism and chauvinism displayed by the social democratic parties which wrecked the Second International on the eve of the Great War, internationalism has been a continuing threat.

Lenin's Third Internationalism was a tool of the Bolsheviks, becoming under Stalin a shameless conveyor belt for Soviet foreign policy.

These pseudo-internationalisms do not invalidate the necessity of international solidarity, they make it all the more vital. Unlike capitalism which seeks conformity on a world scale — Big Macs and Pepsi from New York to Peking — internationalism welcomes and supports the diversities of peoples. It is anti-racist and advocates a unity based on the recognition and celebration of our differences and similarities. Internationalism is a positive statement about the solidarity of all exploited and oppressed working people.

End

Internationalism is also a tactical device to enable the revolutionary working class to overthrow capitalism. If capitalism is internationalist, so must be the working class.

Given the wide differences in economic development between nations, it would

be surprising to find revolution breaking out on a world scale simultaneously.

No, far more likely will be revolutions occurring within the national boundaries. Then, international solidarity becomes vital to defend the isolated revolution and to spread it onto a wider and wider scale.

Revolution

We should not fall into the trap of believing that revolutions must necessarily succumb to the forces of world imperialism. Just because the USA, for example, has a vast arsenal at its disposal, does not mean that it can use it, or that, if used, it can be effective.

The recent example of the USA's inability to defeat the warlord Aided in impoverished Somalia is an example of the limitations of armed intervention. So, the young working class revolution, even if initially restricted to one or two countries has a good chance of success, if there is international working class support. Such support might include strikes, boycotts and agitation for revolution on the 'home front'.

Finally, internationalism is not only a means to the end of revolution. It is an end in itself, in the sense that national barriers and parochialism will be broken down.

There will be an international federation of peoples. For the first time the world will belong to no-one and everyone. Long live the International!